

COURT ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY MONTH

NOVEMBER 2008 EVENTS

COURTS, AGENCIES, AND OTHER PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS CELEBRATE
ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY

The following pages include a sample of events and programs that will be held during the 2008 Court Adoption and Permanency Month, including:

- Adoption finalizations on Adoption Saturdays;
- Celebrations held by the courts, social service agencies, CASA programs, nonprofit agencies, and others;
- County proclamations;
- Adoption fairs; adoption event calendars;
- Recognition and photographs for adoptive families;
- Media coverage; and much more.

The *Court Adoption and Permanency Resource Guide* provides many ideas for celebrating events in November and throughout the year, as well as programs and resources to help courts and agencies find permanent connections for foster children. The guide is available online at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/AdoptionandPermanency.htm

For more information, contact the Center for Families,
Children & the Courts at 415-865-7739 or CFCC@jud.ca.gov.



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS

CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN
& THE COURTS



2008 November Court Adoption and Permanency Month Events (partial listing)

Alameda County

Ninth Annual Adoption Day (by invitation only)

November 15, 2008, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Superior Court of Alameda County is planning its ninth Annual Adoption Day in conjunction with the county's Department of Children and Family Services. judicial officers, court staff, local dignitaries, and various philanthropic agencies have contributed their time, energy, and resources to make this event a memorable experience for the children and families involved in the adoption finalization process. For the past three years, Alameda Juvenile Court has also held midyear adoptions programs in June to reduce the delay or wait time for families that have met all of the requirements and are ready to finalize the adoption process. This program has proven to be quite successful.

Butte County

Third Annual Adoption Day Celebration

November 24, 2008

The Superior Court of Butte County, along with the California Department of Social Services, will host the third annual Adoption Day Celebration at the Butte County Superior Courthouse. The event will begin with opening ceremonies, followed by the finalization of about two dozen adoptions. Families will be photographed with the juvenile presiding judge. A reception at the courthouse will follow, with refreshments and gifts for the families. There will be scrapbooks, crafts, and activities for the children.

El Dorado County

Adoption Day

November 19, 2008, 8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

The Superior Court of El Dorado County will host its National Adoption Day at the Main Street court facility. In collaboration with CASA, Foster Family Services, Lilliput Children's Services, and the Department of Social Services, gift baskets, teddy bears, handmade quilts, balloons, and delicious food and drinks will be provided for the adopted families and their guests. CASA also will provide ceramic handprints for every person who is adopted. An easy-to-read adoption book, *Rosie's Family: An Adoption Story*, will be provided for younger children. Photographs will be taken of the families with the juvenile presiding judge.

Kern County

Fifth Annual Adoption Day Celebration

November 14, 2008, 1 p.m.

The Superior Court of Kern County and the Department of Human Services will celebrate their fifth National Adoption Day on Friday November 14, 2008, at the Juvenile Justice Center. Last year on National Adoption Day, 52 children were adopted. Following the adoption hearings at the Juvenile Justice Center and Family Law Division of the Superior Court, there will be a celebration on the east lawn of the center. The celebration will include several tents and a carnival-like atmosphere, including popcorn, hot dogs, face painting, and Build a Bear for each adopted child. Also, adoption agencies will have information booths. This celebration is a collaborative effort that also includes Koinonia Family Services, Aspiranet, Kern Bridges, ChildNet Youth and Family Services, CASAs, and the CARE Foundation.

Los Angeles County

25th National Adoption Day and Adoption Saturday
November 15, 2008, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County, birthplace of the Adoption Saturday program and National Adoption Day, will hold its 25th Adoption Saturday this year, with plans to finalize the adoptions of 250 children in foster care. Judicial officers and court staff—along with the assistance of the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services, pro bono law firms, the Alliance for Children’s Rights, and the Public Counsel Law Center—will volunteer their time to finalize the adoptions. The day will include a press conference, refreshments, and activities and entertainment for the children and families. The courtrooms and waiting areas will be decorated with balloons, and the children will all receive teddy bears donated through Comfort for Court Kids.

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County also held Adoption Friday afternoons on March 7, April 18, May 30, and September 26, 2008. During each of those afternoons, the number of adoptions finalized ranged from 68 to about 150. Another such event is planned for December 12, 2008. The county also sponsors the Los Angeles Heart Gallery and many other efforts to promote permanency, such as recruiting resource families for foster children.

Orange County

Adoption Awareness Month
November 2008

The Superior Court of Orange County and the county social services agency are planning a joint adoption celebration event hosted in the courtroom of the juvenile presiding judge. This program will highlight individuals and families who want to participate and share their stories. Other county events include a resolution by the county board of supervisors, and a Heart Gallery exhibition.

Sacramento County

Adoption Day
November 15, 2008

The Superior Court of Sacramento will celebrate its annual Adoption Day on the morning of November 15 at the William R. Ridgeway Family Relations Courthouse. The court and its partners will provide refreshments and activities for the children and families to help commemorate their final adoption hearings. The court will use special procedures to help the 100 adoptive families move easily in and out of the courtrooms.

Soroptimist International, private adoption agencies, the California State Fair, the Sacramento Rivercats, and the County of Sacramento have all contributed their support to help make this a memorable day for the children and their families.

San Bernardino County

11th Annual Adoption Ceremony
November 19, 2008, 12 p.m.

The Superior Court of San Bernardino County and the county’s Department of Children’s Services will host the 11th Annual Adoption Finalization at the Ontario Convention Center. This year’s theme, “There’s No Place Like Home,” will celebrate the adoption of more than 100 court-dependent children. The court will staff five courtrooms for this event. In addition, there will be entertainment, crafts for the children, photo opportunities, and a celebration of the hard work done by the Department of Children’s Services and the juvenile dependency court to ensure that every child grows up in a safe and nurturing environment.

San Diego County

Annual Court Adoption Party

November 13, 2008, 1 p.m.–4 p.m.

The Superior Court of San Diego County, in partnership with San Diego County Adoptions (SDCA), organizes a yearly court party during November to celebrate all the adoptions finalized throughout the year. A celebration in the juvenile presiding judge's courtroom will be held as 20 new families finalize their adoptions.

On November 9, 2008, SDCA will unveil the 2009 Leap of Faith Adoption Calendar at the Chargers' home game in celebration of National Adoption Month. For the past two years, San Diego County has collaborated with the San Diego Chargers to produce the Leap of Faith Calendar, which features photos of waiting children with Charger players. Calendars are free and will be available for distribution before game kickoff at 1 p.m. After game day, calendars will be available at city and county libraries throughout San Diego County. Adoptions staff will provide adoption information and distribute calendars at the annual Chargers Blood Drive on November 25, 2008.

In celebration of National Adoption Month, November 10, 2008, will be the first meeting for Bridges to Parenting. This monthly meeting is designed to support prospective adoptive parents by providing an opportunity for additional education and contact with other adoptive families. This year SDCA was selected as a recipient of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2008 Adoption Excellence Award in the area of support for adoptive families.

Throughout the year, SDCA promotes permanency for children by hosting an annual Spring Fling Picnic and a Fall Fest Matching Event. SDCA also promotes adoption awareness by featuring waiting children and adoption success stories on a weekly *Adopt 8* program, in collaboration with channel 8, KFMB-TV.

San Francisco County

Adoption and Permanency Celebration

November 14, 2008

The Superior Court of San Francisco County will host a celebration of families and adoption at the unified family court in San Francisco at the Civic Center Courthouse. The juvenile presiding judge will finalize the adoptions. The San Francisco Human Services Agency will contribute to making it a very special day with food, balloons, and teddy bears. City officials will be in attendance to honor the families.

San Joaquin County

Adoption Saturday

November 15, 2008

The Superior Court of San Joaquin County will be set up three courtrooms to finalize the adoptions for 30 children on Adoption Saturday. There will be balloons, teddy bears, cake, and beverages. The court will provide certificates memorializing the special event that are suitable for framing. Each family will receive a disposable camera so they can have photos of their ceremony. Media will be invited to share in the event as well.

Santa Clara County

Adoption Day

November 14, 2008

The Superior Court of Santa Clara County will celebrate its third annual Adoption Day on the morning of November 14 at its Downtown Superior Court facility. Approximately 25 judicial officers and 40 court staff employees will assist with Adoption Day. There will be refreshments and activities for the children and families awaiting their adoption finalization hearings. Special procedures will be set up to expedite the processing of paperwork and the movement of adoptive families to and from the courtrooms in order to finalize approximately 50 adoptions in a timely manner. Fifteen courtrooms will be used to hear the adoptions. Private adoption agencies and CASA also will volunteer their time for the event and donate balloons, books, and beautiful handmade quilts, and other items for the children. The adoptions are from both probate adoptions and adoptions arising out of the juvenile dependency court.

A standing committee involving judicial officers, court staff, the Department of Family and Children's Services, and adoption agencies plan the adoption celebrations. Santa Clara County also has a Juvenile Dependency Systems Committee that meets monthly to address permanency issues.

Stanislaus County

Annual resolution by board of supervisors and other events

November 2008

The Superior Court of Stanislaus County, along with community services, will add to its quilt, which celebrates permanency and adoption with symbols each time a child is adopted or has dependency terminated. The quilt will be presented during the signing of the annual proclamation by the board of supervisors. Local news media will be invited to attend to provide publicity regarding the adoption process and the importance of adoptive parents to our community. Every adoptive family will receive a family certificate from the court. The community service agency, in collaboration with foster families associations, will host a social event to celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month. The event will be open to adoptive families and those interested in adopting. During the event, parties will be encouraged to share information, and each family will receive a gift basket.

Ventura County

Adoption Fair and Public Adoption Calendar

November 8 and 14, 2008

The Superior Court of Ventura County will hold a special adoption calendar on November 14, 2008, to promote public awareness. The press is invited to this event, and adoptive parents are informed of this calendar in advance. The court will also hold an Adoption Fair on November 8, 2008, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Pacific View Mall, where service providers will share materials and information with prospective adoptive and foster families. The Ventura County Board of Supervisors will pass a resolution in support of Court Adoption and Permanency Month.

Heart Galleries

Many California courts also support the Heart Gallery, which raises community awareness through professional photography exhibits of children and youth living in foster care who need adoptive families and permanent lifelong relationships. The number of Heart Galleries continues to grow throughout the nation. Heart Galleries in California include those in Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, and Solano Counties.

http://www.heartgalleryofamerica.org/Galleries/State_Galleries.asp#cal